

On Top Of The News

Email: news@arubatoday.com

Wednesday, November 4, 2009

At the Renaissance Convention Center

SITE IC 09 concludes with spectacular Honors Gala



ORANJESTAD -- The final banquet of SITE International Conference 09 presented four diverse and entertaining stages as the evening took off with a cocktail reception on the Festival Plaza, went on to present a formal plated banquet at the Renaissance Convention Center, then spun into a colorful Carnaval Parade around the Renaissance Marketplace and continued late into the night at a Club Lounge after-party.

The evening was a combined effort of the Aruba Hotel & Tourism Association, the Aruba Tourism Authority, ECO Destination Management of Aruba, Elite Production & Entertainment and the Renaissance Aruba Resort &

Casino.

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SITE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE 2009 OCTOBER 30 - NOVEMBER 2



SITE IC 09 concludes with spectacular Honors Gala



Continued from Front Page

The culinary team of the Convention Center served a delicious four course dinner complemented by free-flowing wines, courtesy of the Aruba Trading Company, commencing with Roasted Red Pepper Cream Soup with Chicken Dumplings and Basil, followed by a Southwest Salad drizzled with Chipotle Dressing, a Land & Sea main course starring Filet Mignon in a Cabernet Sauvignon Reduction escorted by Garlic Shrimp paired with Grilled

Island Vegetables and Au Gratin Potatoes. The sweet finale presented Lemon Yogurt Mousse with a tropical fruit salsa, just before the beginning of the Carnival Parade. An excellent group of drummers and percussionists provided the musical background for the cocktail party while Kevin James and his band NBO, entertained during dinner. After the dazzling Carnaval Parade around the Seaport Marketplace, to the sound of two marching brass bands, the excited honor gala participants



came back into a trendy, cool lounge-club where they were thrilled to find Abstract Dawn on stage with vocalist Lucre Houtman.

General Manager Paul Gielen welcomed SITE International Conference 09 delegates to the venue on behalf of Renaissance Resorts. He thanked SITE, the Society of Incentive and Travel Executives for allowing Aruba to showcase itself and its many treasures to the top names in today's travel industry. Compliments to the Renaissance team for producing an unforgettable evening, reflecting the island's high-level of hospitality and service. □



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An extravagant farewell to SITE IC 09



ORANJESTAD — The final banquet of SITE IC 09 was co-produced by ECO Destination Management of Aruba showing off that company's great creativity at conceptualizing and executing mega-events, and the Banqueting Team of the Renaissance Aruba Resort. The partners delivered an exciting Carnival-themed



event designed exclusively for SITE 09, with the help of Elite Productions, in charge of sound and light, wines sponsored by the Aruba Trading Company, and ATCO, Associated Transport Company, container-transporting all props and decoration pieces.

"The great partnerships of the two Renaissance hotels with ECO DMS, is what made the evening so successful," remarked Wichita Villacres, ECO President & CEO. "The event greatly benefited from the extra efforts put in by Glenda Henricus, Ruben Mannes, Anneke Leverock & Magali Meza. Their passion and determination allowed us to overcome challenges along the road," she added.

"ECO DMS has been a SITE member for the past 20 years," Villacres went on to explain, "and we are enthusiastic about the MICE market and love group business, as represented by the meeting professionals, members of SITE. I am very proud of the ECO DMS management team in Aruba, and applaud the ATA/AHATA partnership that put together such a great conference program."

SITE members visiting the island between Oct 30th and Nov 2nd, were especially



touched by the warmth and hospitality of the Aruban people, who came out on Sunday night in Carnival costumes in order to participate in the parade around the Renaissance Marketplace. "We couldn't have done it without Aruba's Carnival fans, and we thank you very

much for making it happen," Villacres concluded.

Pictured here Villacres, international co-chair of Site IC 09 with Freddy Muller, being honored by the organization for her efforts at making it so successful; also some images of the successful production. □



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Potpourri in Pediatrics

The 4th annual Dr Bryson Symposium at the Radisson



PALM BEACH – A seminar appropriately titled Potpourri in Pediatrics took place this past weekend at the Radisson Aruba Resort Casino & Spa, Grand Caribbean Ballroom. The seminar program was put together by tireless, local pediatrician Dr. Joel Rajnherc and it featured local



doctors as speakers, sharing from their vast experiences with their peers in the medical profession.

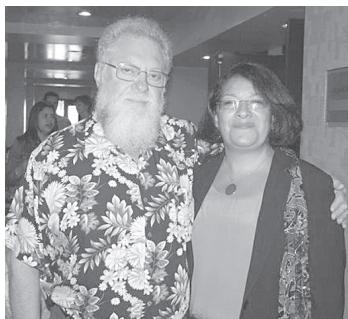
Among topics presented, Multidisciplinary Management of Nutritional Problems in



Children with Dr. Rodriguez, The Pulmonic Murmur with Dr. Pedro, Common Issues in Newborn with Dr. Oudshoorn, Pediatric Urology with Dr. Petronilia, Pediatric Radiology with Dr. Meijer, an

overview on Child Abuse in Aruba with Dr. Rafael-Croes, and Maltreatment of Children

with Prof. Kessler. Our images attest to the fact that Aruba's medical community is eager to network and share information in urology, neonatology, cardiology and radiology, and is willing to tackle tough issues, and openly discuss all aspects of child-care in a holistic approach. Dr. Joel Rajnherc thought about everything including a speaker evaluation form which he will put into good use in planning next year's enrichment day, the 5th annual Dr Bryson Symposium. □



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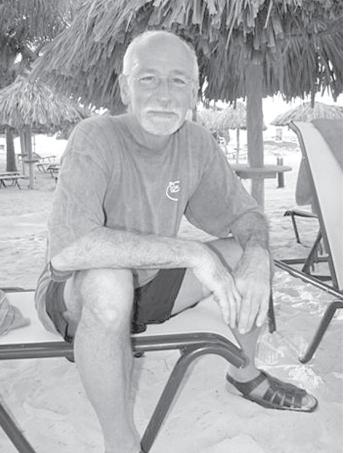
Post-Halloween Beach Bash with the Equator band



PALM BEACH – A great public took refuge at Pure Beach this weekend for a post-Halloween beach bash, a chilled and relaxed escape from the hype and madness of the night before.

DJ Arashi, took turns entertaining the crown, sharing

the sound system with Randy Dawson and the Equator band. Pure Beach offers an amazing ocean -- good swimming for kids and adults, a white sandy beach, loungy-sexy décor, cool breezes, a stylish, tasty menu filled with contemporary favorites in



pretty presentations, comfy furniture, smooth cocktails, all delivered with gracious smiles. Pure Beach is a huge favorite among locals who like to see and be seen on



Sunday afternoon. You are invited to hang around, show off your bathing suits, sip and socialize, mix with visitors and resort guests, for a One Happy Afternoon. □



Trio Huasteca delivers an evening of romance and music



Palm Beach – Trio Huasteca, delivered an evening of pure joy to Mr Jazz, last Wednesday night, delighting locals and visitors with three hours of nonstop music. The group crisscrossed all Caribbean islands as well as Mexico, Venezuela & Colombia looking for classic love songs, romances and folkloric fun



compositions and performed them beautifully to their enchanted and entertained audience at Mr Jazz, the Supper Club at Paseo Herencia.

Etty Toppenberg, Eric Escalone & Max Hassel, the guitarists/vocalists at the heart of Trio Huasteca, recruited their friends Mario Middendorp, on base, and



Yon Escharbaai, on maracas, to create an exceptional musical evening, enjoyed in the comfort of Aruba's nicest night club, over Happy Hour bar prices.

Trio Huasteca, celebrating four decades in music on the island,

are Aruba's ambassadors of song, they are troubadours in the true sense of the word mixing themes of courtship, love and betrayal, with humor, street and childhood songs.

Celebrating 40 years of marriage, romance and love over delicious dinner at Mr Jazz, Paula & Thomas Parish, from Long Island, NY, guests of the Marriott Surf Club. They were joined by Cindy & Ken Baron, from Sunapee, New Hampshire who have been dancing together for the past 31 years, and their daughter Lauryn Baron whose boyfriend Paul Beaudet



celebrated his 30th birthday at Mr Jazz.

Pictured here, locals and visitors share their passion for food, wine, love, music and dance at Mr Jazz, Paseo Herencia. □



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South Africa Tourism offers fantastic Kickoff Celebration Luncheon



PALM BEACH – South African Tourism hosted a unique kick off celebration luncheon at the Radisson Aruba Resort Casino & Spa designed to entertain SITE International Conference 09 delegates, and educate them about travel to South Africa, in preparation for the SITE IC 2010 in Cape Town, SA. The drummers of Drum

Café sounded the welcome percussion in the garden of the Radisson, creating a sense of anticipation, all the way to the Grand Caribbean Ballroom where a colorful banquet was set up by the Radisson Aruba Resort Casino & Spa event team directed and sponsored by the Cape Town & Western Cape Convention Bureau, Site Global, South African Airways and South African Tourism, as inspired by its slogan, Business Unusual.

On the menu as appetizers, delivered on family platters and shared: Vegetable Samosas with Chutney Cream, Spiced Patat Spears with Peanut & Coriander Satay dip and Maize Nut Fritters with Apple & Mint Raita. Main courses included Cape Seafood Curry, Chicken Pie, Dhal with Roasted Butternut, Basmati Rice and Morog with Coconut & Peanuts, attesting to the continent's Dutch and Indian roots.

The Malva Pudding with Amarula Custard, a delicious marshmallow dessert was chased by gold dusted fresh cut fruits.

Two exceptional South African wines escorted the outstanding

of Executive Chef Hector Espinosa. dishes, Mulderbosch Sauvignon Blanc 2008 and Mulderbosch Faithful Hound 2005.

The luncheon also featured sensational singer Lorraine Klassen, against a backdrop of irresistible South African images. The spirited, high-energy diva had delegates on their feet dancing, vowing to attend the South African conference, for the food, for the wine, for the music, for

the scenery and for a million other reasons as outlined by organizers pitching next year's international conference and skillfully awakening the desire to explore the southern tip of the world's second largest continent.

Mosaic Fabulous Event Planners helped recruit the beautiful male and female models, direct the traffic and the dancing, serve Zebraitinis and mix genuine Aruban

hospitality & charm in with South African passion and spice. □

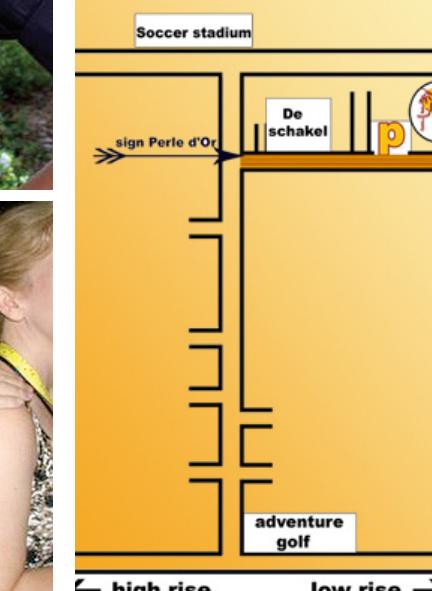


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SITE Executives visit Aruba's Numismatic Museum



ORANJESTAD – This past Sunday, executives from the SITE convention made an effort to learn as much about Aruba as possible including a visit to Aruba's Numismatic Museum. More than 275 travel execs participated in this successful conference held this past weekend.

Aruba put out the Red Carpet during their stay on the island. The SITE execs participated in many activities all over the island including tours, sailing, snorkeling, theme parties and all the fun happenings that Aruba's tourism experts are perfectionists at. The end result of the conference

produced a great awareness of our One Happy Island Aruba and all the wonderful things we have to offer incentive group travelers.

The photos show SITE executives enjoying their visit at the Numismatic Museum in downtown Oranjestad. □



HEALTH

Aruba TODAY

The Mouth of the Fish

by Carlos Viana

Here in Aruba a folk saying says: "Because of his mouth the fish dies!" I love folk sayings, like natural folk remedies, they have an uncanny insight into the human condition. If fish would be a little more careful what they put in their mouths they might live longer. Interestingly, professionally I can say the same about many people. What would you think about dying not only from what you are putting in your mouth but also its condition? What am I getting at? Ask your dental hygienist. They know infections in your mouth are not only detrimental to your health; they are a great indication of your general health condition.

One of the most important parts of your mouth is the area of gum that surrounds the tooth. "Perioral" means "related to the mouth". "Dontal" means "tooth", so, periodontal means: "the area in your mouth around a tooth". Most people assume that your teeth are attached to your jaws. This is far from the truth. The periodontal area is a complex combination of structures that support teeth and include: cementum, periodontal ligament, alveolar bone, and the gingival or gums. Beyond the structure we find holes between the teeth and gums where bacteria reside. The type and amount of bacteria in

your mouth is the foundation of many health problems. Bacteria allowed to attack this area is called periodontal disease and there are two principle kinds. "Gingivitis" is when the bacteria are breaking down the gums and "periodontitis" is a disease state affecting the periodontal tissue.

Periodontal disease is often undetected in routine dental examinations because of the difficulty and expense of measuring the problem. Any oral discomfort or abnormal coloring can indicate infection. Unfortunately gum disease isn't associated with much pain, especially in its early phases. Without pain, most people aren't concerned about their teeth and gums. You can keep a lookout for periodontal infection by being aware of the symptoms listed below. Bleeding is the most common marker of infection. Ulcers or wounds in the gum pocket bleed with the smallest provocation, such as flossing, brushing, irrigating, or even rinsing and chewing. If you see even a little blood when you are cleaning your mouth, there is a problem! Other symptoms include: red, swollen or tender gums. Abscesses are swellings or bumps on the gum surface that can either appear suddenly or grow gradually. They can feel hot and/or painful. An abscess always indicates periodontal infection.

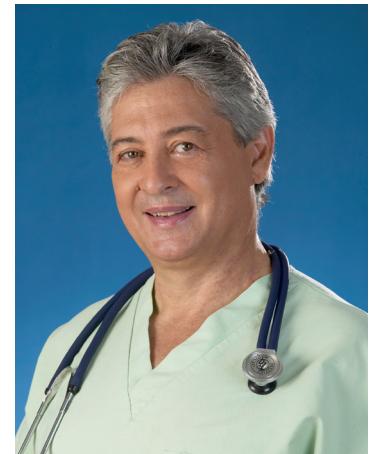
Note carefully which teeth are sensitive to pain and whether this condition is constant or fluctuates. If the area is irrigated with an anti-microbial solution and the discomfort goes away, the source for the pain is most likely periodontal infection. However, if the discomfort is a throbbing pain, and cold relieves it, the infection is probably into the nerve, and the tooth needs immediate attention. Also, gums that have pulled away from the teeth, loose, shifting teeth, or a change in the way teeth or partial dentures fit together when you bite, is an indication of infection. Persistent bad breath is usually caused by hydrogen sulfide compounds, which are bacterial waste products. It is almost always a sign of periodontal infection. One way to determine this is to floss and then smell the floss. If it smells bad, like rotten eggs or spoiled food, periodontal infection is probably present.

So, why so much interest in the condition of your mouth? Gum disease has been overshadowed as a risk factor in heart disease and other health problems by more commonly acknowledged factors such as smoking, cholesterol, lack of exercise, and obesity. But recent studies report the link between the severity of gum disease (measured by amount of

jaw bone loss) and risk of heart disease, identified gum disease as a previously-unrecognized risk factor for heart disease and hardening of the arteries. Gum disease leading to severe periodontal (jaw) bone loss increased the risk of death from heart disease. It seems that bacteria from dental plaque (tooth debris) enter the circulation and lodge in blood vessels, where they participate in producing atherosclerotic plaque (fatty deposits). Additional studies link poor blood sugar control in diabetics, low birth weight in premature babies, and pneumonia. Wow, all this from your mouth!

Get the Point! Your mouth is ideally suited for medical problems. Biting stress, instantaneous temperature changes, rapid fluctuations from acidity to alkalinity and the warm, salty, wet environment of your mouth is a rich bacteria growing environment. Bacteria allowed to thrive in your mouth can have profound medical consequences.

You might not be "looking a gift horse in the mouth", but rest assured that during your consultation I will be looking into your mouth. Treating the "whole person" which is what "holistic" means also means your mouth. When we work together with your dentist or your house doctor the patient is the winner.



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CARLOS VIANA, Ph. D. is an Oriental Medical Doctor (O.M.D.) having studied in China; a US Board Cert. Clinical Nutritionist (C.C.N.), an Addiction Professional (C.Ad.), Chairperson of the Latin American Committee of the International Academy of Oral Medicine and Toxicology (IAOMT), a Rejuvenating Cell Therapist specializing in Age Management, has a weekly radio program, writes and lectures extensively. For information: VIANA HEALING CENTER, Kibaima 7, St Cruz TEL: 585-1270 Web Site: www.vianaheal.com

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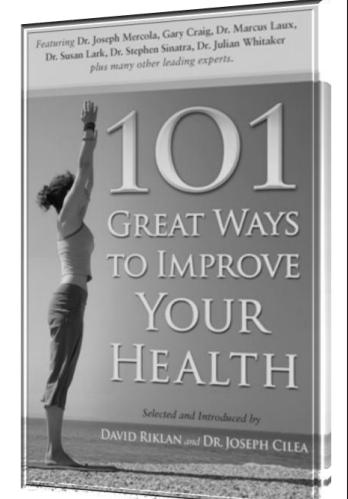


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Club replaces Lansford after scoring fifth-fewest runs in '09

Meulens named Giants hitting coach



By Chris Haft

MLB.com

SAN FRANCISCO -- Though Hensley Meulens speaks five languages, he realizes that instilling plate discipline within Giants batters is more of a mental process than a verbal one.

Meulens, named San Francisco's new hitting coach on Monday, has an intriguing background. He was the first native of Curacao to reach the Major Leagues. He was nurtured professionally in the

New York Yankees system, where he received coaching from stars of yesteryear such as Wally Moon and Clete Boyer, and he crossed paths with enduring figures such as Don Mattingly. Playing professionally overseas enabled him to learn Japanese, which complemented his fluency in English, Spanish, Dutch and Papiamento, Curacao's most widely used language. None of that will matter much if Meulens, 42, can't curb

the Giants' free-swinging tendencies that helped cost Carney Lansford his job as hitting coach. San Francisco's 392 walks, fewest in the Majors, contributed to its .309 on-base percentage, also last in both leagues. The highest-ranking Giant among National Leaguers in pitches seen per plate appearance was Aaron Rowand, whose 3.47 average was good for 69th.

Meulens indicated that he'll have to preach patience differently to each hitter.

"Not everybody can be taught the same," Meulens said. "Psychology plays a big part in me trying to get in a guy's head and find out what works for him."

Meulens believes that the more confidence a hitter maintains, the more comfortable he'll feel as he attempts to run up a deep count.

Citing the get-a-good-pitch-to-hit bromide, Meulens noted, "Sometimes it's the first pitch; sometimes it's the fifth. It's all about trusting your hands and trusting yourself. ... They don't come overnight. There's a fine line between being aggressive and overaggressive."

Meulens joined the Giants' organization this year as Triple-A Fresno's hitting coach after spending six seasons coaching in the Baltimore and Pittsburgh systems. He is credited with making an immediate impact with Fresno, as John Bowker (.347) and Jesus Guzman (.321) finished first and fifth, respectively, in the Pacific Coast League batting race. Meulens hastened the improvement of Eugenio Velez, who galvanized San Francisco's offense by hitting safely in his first 14 games after being recalled July 27. Meulens also worked with catcher Buster Posey, who hit .321 with 35 games at Fresno. Manager Bruce Bochy said that Meulens' familiarity with these younger Giants who could occupy key roles on the 2010 squad was a factor in his hiring.

"They see him as a father figure, a guy they really have a lot of trust in," Bochy said. Meulens, who hit .220 with 15 home runs and 53 RBI in 182 Major League games spanning all or part of seven Major League seasons, also acquainted himself with Giants veterans while joining San Francisco as a coaching assistant in September.

"I got into a comfort zone with those guys, as well," said Meulens, who gained his renowned nickname "Bam Bam" as a teenager.

Reflecting the club's satisfaction with Meulens, Bochy said that the Giants interviewed no candidates from outside the organization, though Bob Mariano, San Francisco's coordinator of Minor League hitting instruction, also was considered for the job. Bochy said that Meulens' promotion should motivate Minor League staffers. "That sends a great message to all these guys who are working their tails off down there," Bochy said. □

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Caribbean Tourism Day

Labega: Diversity drives island's tourism industry

PHILIPSBURG--On the occasion of Caribbean Tourism Day, Head of the St. Maarten Tourist Bureau Regina Labega said the character and make-up of St. Maarten perfectly ties in with this year's theme: "Tourism: Celebrating Diversity." Labega said as a destination solely dependant on tourism, it is important for the general population to acknowledge this fact and to recognize that by definition the Caribbean represents diversity and nowhere this is more reflected than in St. Maarten.

"Diversity is, indeed, what drives our tourism industry. Our tourism product offers such a wide range that it makes it possible for us to cater to all kinds of visitors from every part of the world. Perhaps this is one of the reasons why the latest survey, carried out by the Florida Caribbean Cruise

Association (FCCA), ranked St. Maarten number one in the region concerning passenger satisfaction," she said.

Labega said there can be no question about the significant role St. Maarten has to play in the sustainable development of the region, while on the other hand the contribution of Caribbean visitors to the island's economic development cannot be underestimated.

She explained that since 2005 the Tourism Master Plan (TourMap) has established the fact that visitors from the Caribbean outspend all others, surpassing the average daily expenditure by over 30 per cent.

"That is why the Island Government remains committed to increasing its efforts to attract more Caribbean visitors to St. Maarten, in spite of the hurdles it has

to scale. Our new branding strategy, launched recently, will expectedly reposition the island in the Caribbean market more favourably," she said. She went on to say it may be a coincidence that Caribbean Tourism Day falls just about a week before St. Maarten/St Martin Day, but given the character of the island, it is appropriate that the two celebrations follow each other so closely.

She said this is not only because St. Maarten was rated the number one destination in the Caribbean last year by TripAdvisor, the world's most influential online travel Website, but also due to the

fact that the destiny of the island lies squarely within the Caribbean region.

"And although our Caribbean vocation might not always be as evident as it ought to be, it is clear that our brothers and sisters in this hemisphere feel at home in St. Maarten, while St. Maarteners cherish their Caribbean identity," Labega said.

"In this regard, suffice it to point to the fact that St. Maarteners love all things Caribbean, whether it is the music, the food, or sports, where cricket – that quintessential Caribbean identifier – has been witnessing an exciting renaissance. That is why Brian Lara is as

much a household name in his native Trinidad as he is in St. Maarten. That is why Usain Bolt, though Jamaican, is as much beloved here in St. Maarten," she added.

What binds St. Maarten to the Caribbean, she continued, is much more than the island's membership in regional tourism organizations such as the Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO) and what binds the Caribbean to St. Maarten is much more than sun, sea and sand.

"History, geography and culture place us firmly at the centre of the Caribbean family. Happy Caribbean Tourism Day," Labega concluded. □

The Cayman Islands and Netherlands Antilles Sign Tax Information Exchange Agreement



George Town, Grand Cayman – The Cayman Islands signed a Tax Information Exchange Agreement (TIEA) with the Netherlands Antilles on 29 October 2009 whilst attending the CFATF Plenary, held in Curacao.

The agreement, which is Cayman's fourteenth, was signed on behalf of the Cayman Islands by Attorney General, the Honourable Samuel Bulgin, who was Cabinet's authorised signatory.

Mr Bulgin said: "This signing represents the Cayman Islands continued commitment to OECD standards for transparency and exchange of information on tax matters. It will commemorate the beginning of what I am sure will be a mutually-rewarding

relationship between the Cayman Islands and the Netherlands Antilles."

Negotiations have also been completed with a number of other countries including Aruba, Australia, Canada, Germany, Italy and Mexico and it is anticipated that agreements will be signed before the end of 2009. Negotiations are also currently ongoing with a further 10 jurisdictions which comprise Argentina, Belgium, China, Czech Republic, India, Japan, Korea, Portugal, Spain and South Africa..

Commenting on the signing, Premier/Leader of Government Business, Minister for Financial Services, the Honourable McKeava Bush said "The Cayman Islands are committed to effective implementation of these agreements and as such, we have in place all the necessary internal processes required for the legal implementation of all signed agreements." □



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*** Human Hints Daily ***

You Won't Find Completion in Separation

When we want three dimensional things to fulfill us, we seek validation from an illusion. We search outside of ourselves for something that is separate from us, in order to complete ourselves. In this way, acquiring or wanting something drives us away from ourselves, and takes us further from our goal of self-completion. The more stuff we acquire, the further we get from who we really are inside.

We also reach outside of ourselves when we think a certain situation will make us happy. The idea is to be happy and complete before the situation occurs. Become complete inside, and your external world will reflect that completeness.

This is not to say that you can't have three dimensional belongings. It can be a lot of fun to be an enlightened millionaire. What makes the difference is your attitude toward your stuff, your reason for having it. Do your possessions define you or do you define them? If everything you own went up in flames today, would you feel loss or an opportunity to grow and redefine yourself? You let go of the past by focusing on your future.

The more three dimensional stuff we have in our lives, the more of our energy is held by it. This is the actual energy of our Life Force, which we could be using for other means such as conscious manifestation.

Our three dimensional possessions consume our energy. Everything we own takes up a piece of our Life Force. The percentage of our energy held by any given three dimensional thing depends on how attached to it we are. The more attached we are to our stuff, the more we are using it to define us. It is alright to have things, just don't let them define who you are. When we seek validation and definition in the three dimensional world, we fall into the illusion of separation.

When we become aware of Unity Consciousness, we realize that all three dimensional things come from the same source. We are all pieces of the Mass Consciousness. We begin to understand that we each generate our hologram from the same energy source. We learn to naturally access the Infinite Abundance of the Universe.

When you look for completion outside of yourself, you become more separate, less complete. When you rely on an external force, whether it's a person, a situation or a thing, you are subjecting yourself to their flippant whims. When you connect your emotions to something you cannot control, you become vulnerable and you give away your sovereignty. You are giving your power to an illusion.

When you find completion inside yourself, you empower your personal foundation. When you know yourself, you will remain calm and centered when the Winds of Change blow through this three dimensional plane of expression.

Until Tomorrow...

Go to www.HumanHints.com to sign up to receive this column in your email each day.

Quentin Danziger

Quentin has over 20 years experience balancing what we refer to as the Real World, with science and spirit. He has held positions of responsibility and authority, received a Bachelor of Science in Engineering Physics from Colorado School of Mines, and has also studied many avenues of alternative thought.

HumanHints is the culmination of his knowledge, experience and practice. These free daily emails detail concrete, real-world techniques to consciously create any future you choose, while in the throes of daily life created by outdated modes of thought.

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Family Pleads For Return Of Hero Pilot's Body

The sister of a pilot feared dead after heroically saving the lives of his passengers has pleaded for help to get his body back home.

British pilot Robert Mansell ditched his small plane in to the ocean off the tiny Dutch Caribbean island of Bonaire when its right engine failed. All nine passengers scrambled to safety and were left floating in the sea before being picked up by a passing ship.

But Mr Mansell, 32, is believed to have sunk with the aircraft still strapped to his seat after efforts to release him failed.

Claire Mansell said: "It's been a week now and Robert is still there. No one has stepped forward to help us through this; no one is saying 'this is what we're going to do'.

"We feel really confused and let down. Everyone is saying he is a hero, so let's bring the hero home.

"We feel like it's about money, because it would be so expensive, and that's why no one is standing up to help. We just don't know what to do.

"Salvage and repatriation is all that matters to us now. We just want him back, to bring him home and do what's best for him so we can begin grieving."

Claire said her father Roger is finding it particularly hard. She said: "Dad is very practical but he is really struggling over this. We're on the edge of our nerves, we're reaching our limit.



"We would love the British authorities to take charge but we know it's out of their control. You'd just hope though, as Rob is a British citizen, that they would be able to do something."

Sky News understands that close friends of the Mansell family are trying to meet members of the Dutch Antilles government in Curacao, an island close to Bonaire, to discuss what is happening. The authority's ministry for traffic and transport is investigating the crash but would not confirm whether it

will attempt to recover the body of Mr Mansell and salvage the twin-engine Britten-Norman Islander aircraft.

The British Foreign Office said: "We are aware of the death of a British national in a plane crash near Curacao. We are providing consular assistance to the family."

Divi Divi Air, Mr Mansell's employers, said it was unable to comment on salvage attempts while there was an investigation going on.

It seems that Mr Mansell's friends are meeting the airline later. □

Richardson pushes benefits of open skies agreements

PHILLIPSBURG -- Commissioner in charge of Aviation Affairs Frans Richardson on Sunday said he is looking forward to the day when bilateral agreements can be signed, facilitating open sky policies that would benefit St. Maarten.

The Commissioner, speaking at the inaugural celebration marking WestJet's service to St. Maarten, said, "We need to implement changes in our aviation sector to make us even more competitive and more sustainable."

Open skies policies, he contended, will be a start to opening up and liberalizing the air travel market, giving rise to the abolition of monopolies, greater competition and potentially lower fares.

"Key provisions of most of the existing civil agreements include: No restrictions on international route rights, number of designated airlines, capacity, frequencies and types of

aircraft," Richardson said.

"It also provides for fair and equal opportunity to compete. All carriers, designated and non-designated, of countries may establish sales offices in the other country, convert earnings and remit them in hard currency promptly and without restrictions."

"Designated carriers are free to provide their own ground-handling services or choose among competing providers. It also provides for liberal charter arrangements. Carriers may choose to operate under the charter regulations of either country," Richardson said.

He concluded by stating that he is optimistic about our strategic location with convenient airlift from most major U.S. markets, and now from Toronto, Canada.

"One day I hope to sign open skies agreements, especially with St. Maarten closing in on country status." □

Setar's Bataya Di Impulso rocks de Palm Island



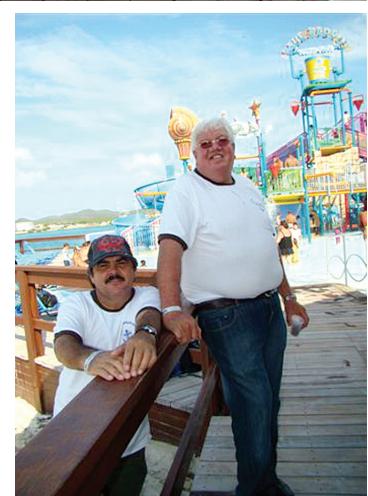
BALASHI – More than 400 fun-loving guests of Setar NV, the island's largest

telecommunication company, came to De Palm island this past weekend for a mega-

party at the end of Bataya Di Impulso di Setar. The totally fun, totally all-inclusive party

included unlimited, delicious food and drink, live music, popular games, snorkeling, beach activities and the Blue Parrot water park, delighting kids and adults, with 70 interactive aqua games, including the giant flood bucket.

The colorful water play-structure with 6 water slides served guests all day, wishing that the party will go on forever. □



UK weddings to Aruba double



PALM BEACH - The sun-kissed Dutch Caribbean island of Aruba is becoming a favorite for loved-up UK couples looking to tie the knot, with bookings for wedding packages for 2010 already at twice the number sold this year. The figures come from leading specialist operators Thomson

and First Choice, and the Aruba Tourism Authority is anticipating further growth with increased accessibility from the UK next year, with Thomson Airways offering weekly services to Aruba from both London Gatwick and Manchester as of May 2010. Aruba's breathtaking sunsets,



Julia Renfro

world-class beaches and year-round warm weather make the island a picture perfect place for a destination wedding. Couples choosing to get married in Aruba usually opt to have their civil ceremony in the morning at the historic, sea-colored Civil House first, followed by a blessing on the beach or at one of Aruba's luxurious hotels and resorts later in the day. Joanna Walding, Aruba Tourism Authority UK Director, said, "Aruba is really capturing the imagination of couples looking for a romantic, sun-drenched destination for the wedding of their dreams, with the island's powder white sand

beaches and turquoise shores providing the ideal setting". She continued, "Unlike other popular destinations, most resorts and hotels in Aruba will only hold one ceremony per day so weddings have a more intimate feel - and with Aruba now becoming more accessible than ever to British travelers we are confident that the trend will continue". All First Choice and Thomson wedding packages include planning and administration (with a wedding representative taking care of all the arrangements); the all-important ceremony at the Civil Town House; venue decoration; marriage license, certificate and

registrar fees; a bouquet for the bride and a buttonhole for the groom; wedding cake; and sparkling wine toast. First Choice offers 14 night holidays in Aruba staying all-inclusive at the 5 Sun Occidental Grand Aruba departing from London Gatwick on the 8th May 2009.

Guaranteed to take your breath away, the Occidental Grand Aruba offers luxury in every sense of the word, with a truly elegant decor, beautiful rooms and countless facilities. Special features like its beach massage service and Japanese garden restaurant make this hotel unforgettable. □

~ Photos by Julia Renfro ~



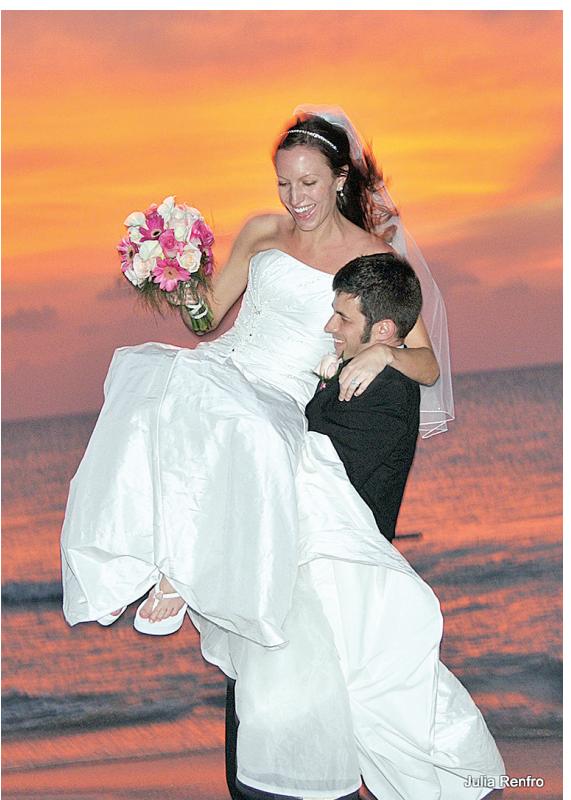
Julia Renfro



Julia Renfro



Julia Renfro



Julia Renfro



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Wednesday, November 4, 2009



Delegates dressed in traditional Ndebele outfits stand against a wall ahead of the Institute of African Royalty launch in Johannesburg, South Africa, Thursday Nov. 3, 2009. The kings, queens and chiefs of Africa say they have a role to play in democracy and development on the continent - and that former South African President Nelson Mandela is their role model. Two dozen traditional leaders from across the continent gathered on a Johannesburg university campus to launch the Institute which they say will be a combination of think tank and lobby group.

Associated Press

Governors' races in two states test Obama's clout

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Barack Obama's political influence was on the line Tuesday in two state gubernatorial elections that could serve as warning signs for Democrats about America's mood heading into the 2010 congressional elections.

One year after Obama won the White House in an electoral landslide and Democrats expanded their majorities in Congress, the focus was on Virginia and New Jersey, where Democratic control was in danger despite hefty campaigning by Obama himself.

The outcomes were sure to feed discussion about the state of the electorate, the status of the diverse coalition that sent Obama to the White House and the limits of the



Naomi Horak, 23, of Arlington, Va., left, exits the Wilson precinct voting station with Ben Aiken, 26, of Arlington, Va., on election day in Arlington, Va., on Tuesday, Nov. 3, 2009. The election includes the race for Virginia's next governor, with Democrat Creigh Deeds running against Republican Bob McDonnell.

Associated Press

president's influence on the party's base of support. Republican victories in one or more races could energize a party that has lost back-to-back national elections, just as it seeks to raise money and recruit candidates to prepare for next year.

Tuesday's impact on Obama's standing and on the 2010 elections can be overstated easily. Voters were often

focused on local issues and local personalities. Indeed, most people in Virginia and New Jersey said they were not casting ballots because of their feelings about Obama.

Yet national issues, such as the economic recession, clearly were a factor, with voter attitudes shaped to some degree by how people felt about the state of their nation.

Continued on Next Page

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Corps starts \$1B barrier for western New Orleans



In a Fri., Oct. 30, 2009 photo, the Army Corps of Engineers begins a \$1 billion project, the West Closure Structure, to close off navigation and drainage canals that feed into the West Bank and turn into conduits for storm surge during hurricanes, in Harvey, La.

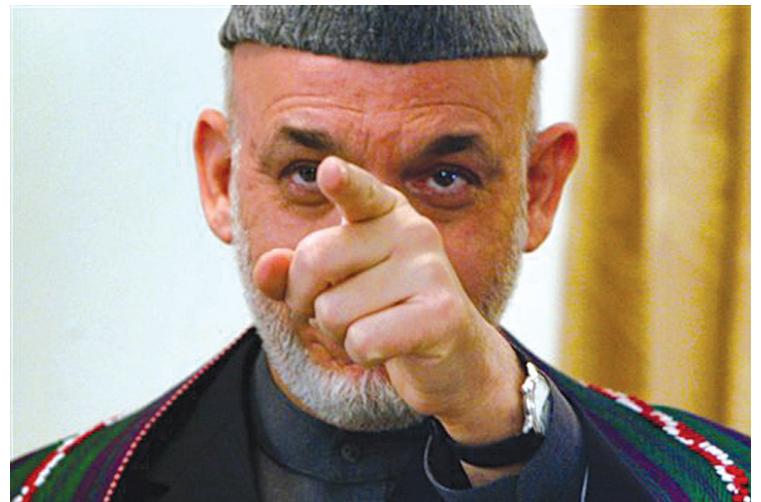
Associated Press

CAIN BURDEAU

Associated Press Writer

HARVEY, Louisiana (AP) — Mindful that the West Bank of New Orleans has regained its pre-Hurricane Katrina population and is primed for growth, the Army Corps of Engineers is launching a \$1 billion effort to keep the next storm at bay.

Continued on Page B5



Afghan President Hamid Karzai gestures during a press conference at the presidential palace in Kabul, Afghanistan, Tuesday, Nov. 3, 2009. Karzai reached out to his opponents, saying that he will welcome opponents into his government and promising reforms to root out corruption that has undermined trust in his administration Tuesday, a day after he was declared victor of a presidential election.

Associated Press

Karzai promises reform — but without specifics

AMIR SHAH and HEIDI VOGT

Associated Press Writers

KABUL (AP) — Afghanistan's president welcomed his new term — achieved after his main opponent withdrew from a runoff election — by reaching out to opponents Tuesday and promising to banish the corruption that has undermined his administration.

Continued on Page B9



Voters wait in line at a polling place in Allen Glen, Va., Tuesday, Nov. 3, 2009.

Associated Press

OBAMA'S CLOUT

Continued from Page B1

It also was difficult to separate Obama from the outcomes after he devoted much time working to persuade voters to elect Democrat R. Creigh Deeds over Republican Bob McDonnell in Virginia and re-elect Democratic Gov. Jon Corzine of New Jersey, who was in a three-way race with Republican Chris Christie and independent Chris Daggett.

Obama campaigned in person for both Deeds and Corzine and was featured in their advertisements. He characterized

the two as necessary allies in the White House's effort to advance his plans. He also deployed his political campaign arm, Organizing for America, to try to ensure the swarms of party loyalists and new voters he attracted in 2008 would turn out.

He also sought to ensure the Democrats would pick up a vacant upstate New York congressional seat long held by Republicans. In that race, Democrat Bill Owens faced conservative Doug Hoffman.

In doing so, Obama raised the stakes of a low-enthusiasm off-year election

season.

Thus, any Democratic losses would be a blot on Obama's political standing to some degree and would signal trouble ahead as he seeks to advance his agenda, protect Democratic majorities in Congress and expand his party's grip on governors' seats next year. Obama needs all the lawmakers he can get to pass his legislative priorities of health care and climate change. Defeats Tuesday could make it harder for him to persuade moderate Democrats from conservative areas to get on board. They have been hearing from voters worried about his expansion of government at a time of rising deficits.

Even before the first votes were counted, there were new signs of difficulties on health care, Obama's signature issue. Senate Democratic Leader Harry Reid indicated Tuesday that lawmakers might not complete legislation this year, which would miss Obama's deadline and push debate into the congressional election year. The congressional health care battle has been roiling the nation for much of the last half-year.

Defeats could point to future problems for Democrats, particularly in moderate districts and in swing states like Ohio, Colorado and Nevada. In

2010, most governors, a third of the Senate and all members of the House of Representatives will be on ballots. A loss in New Jersey would be particularly disappointing for Obama because it is a traditional Democratic-leaning state with an incumbent Democratic governor.

Virginia is a new swing state and has trended Democratic in recent elections after being reliably Republican in national races for many years. It is home to a slew of northern bellwether counties filled with independents who carried Obama to victory last year, the first Democrat to win the state in a White House race since 1964.

A loss in Virginia could suggest that the diverse coalition that Obama cobbled together last year in Virginia and elsewhere — blacks, Hispanics, young people, independents and Republican crossovers — was a one-election phenomenon that did not transfer to the Democratic Party when Obama was not on the ballot.

In other races Tuesday, voters in the northeastern state of Maine weighed in on same-sex marriage in a closely watched initiative, and a number of cities selected mayors, including New York. Mayor Michael Bloomberg was heavily favored to win re-election. □

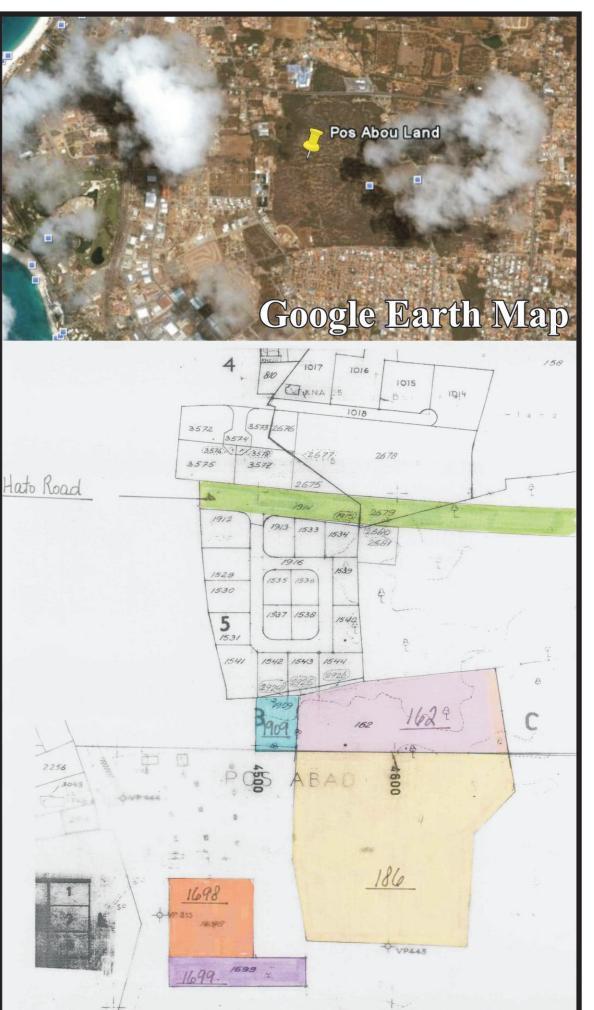
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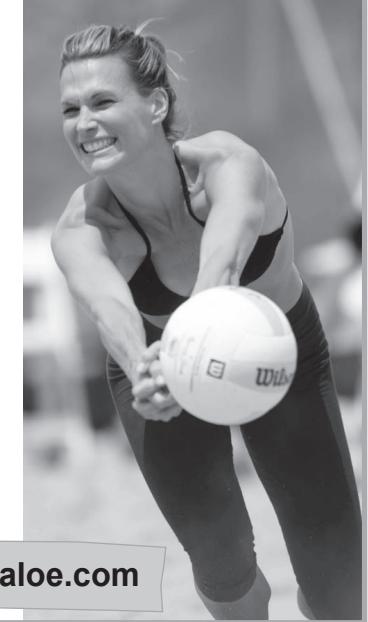




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DC sniper asks Supreme Court to block execution

MARK SHERMAN

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Attorneys for John Allen Muhammad, mastermind of the 2002 sniper attacks that left 10 dead in the Washington, D.C., area, asked the U.S. Supreme Court on Tuesday to block his execution.

The 48-year-old Muhammad is scheduled to die by injection on Nov. 10 at a Virginia prison. In court papers, his attorneys say the execution should be put off while the court considers whether his trial lawyer was ineffective.

Muhammad was convicted of killing Dean Harold Meyers at a Manassas, Virginia, gasoline station during a three-week spree in October 2002 that spanned Maryland, Virginia and the District of Columbia, the U.S. capital. Muhammad and his teenage accomplice, Lee Boyd Malvo, also were suspected of fatal shootings in other states, including Louisiana and Alabama. Malvo is serving a life sentence in Maryland.

Muhammad's lawyers also have asked Virginia Gov. Timothy M. Kaine for clemency, saying Muhammad is mentally ill and should not be executed.

In a 40-minute video to Kaine last month, attorneys, mental health experts and witnesses

described Muhammad's illness. Muhammad's attorneys claim he has brain damage, brain dysfunction and neurological deficits, as well as psychotic and delusional behavior, exacerbated by the Gulf War syndrome he suffered as a sergeant in the 1990 Persian Gulf war.

They also submitted an interview with a juror who said that she would not have sentenced Muhammad to death if she had known of his severe mental illness.

The Supreme Court has banned executing the insane or the mentally disabled, measured by an IQ less than 70, established by the age of 18, and the lack of basic adaptive skills.

Kaine has said he knows of no reason he would commute Muhammad's sentence to life in prison, but that he would review the request. The Roman Catholic governor is opposed to the death penalty, but as governor he has allowed nine executions and commuted one sentence, for a man who Kaine determined was too mentally ill to be executed.

Kaine usually waits for a condemned inmate to exhaust all appeals before acting on a clemency request. The Supreme Court could act any time before the scheduled execution. □

In a Tuesday Nov. 18, 2003 file photo, convicted sniper John Allen Muhammad is escorted into the Virginia Beach Circuit Court in Virginia Beach, Va. Virginia Department of Corrections spokesman Larry Traylor says Muhammad declined to choose between lethal injection and electrocution, so under state law the method defaults to lethal injection. Muhammad is scheduled to be executed on Nov. 10 for the October 2002 slaying of Dean Harold Meyers at a Manassas gas station during a string of shootings that left 10 people dead and three wounded in Virginia, Washington, D.C., and Maryland.

Associated Press



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House bill to go after any large financial firm



In this photo taken on March 27, 2009 photo shows the Federal Reserve Building on Constitution Avenue in Washington. Banks trimmed their borrowing from the Federal Reserve's emergency lending program over the past week, evidence that some credit problems are easing as the economy recovers. The Fed said Thursday Oct. 29, 2009 that commercial banks averaged \$22.6 billion in daily borrowing over the week that ended Wednesday. That's down from \$23.8 billion in the week ended Oct. 21, and much lower than \$112 billion a year ago at the height of the financial crisis.

By ANNE FLAHERTY

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — In a sharp rebuke of Wall Street after a string of hefty bailouts last year, House Democrats are considering legislation that

would let the government break up even healthy firms if regulators think they've grown too big.

Democrats also want to prohibit the Federal Reserve from directly lending to failing

institutions.

"No more Fed (money) to AIG. No more Fed to Bear Stearns," said Rep. Barney Frank, referring to two major recipients of the Fed's emergency lending program.

Associated Press

The two provisions were expected to pass as part of a broader bill being considered this month by the House Financial Services Committee.

The legislation would set tougher standards for firms that grow so large and influential that regulators determine their failure could bring down the entire economy. It also would let regulators seize failing institutions, wipe out their shareholders and dismantle companies before their collapse frightens investors. The full House was expected to vote on the bill and other financial reform proposals in early December.

Rep. Paul Kanjorski of Pennsylvania, a senior Democrat on the panel, wants to amend the bill so regulators could pre-emptively break apart any institution if they determine that its sheer size is a threat to the economy. A spokeswoman said the measure was still being drafted.

Frank, who chairs the Financial Services Committee, said he expects the proposal

and a similar one by Rep. Ed Perlmutter, D-Colo., to pass because of the risk mammoth institutions can pose to the economy.

The Obama administration, which hasn't embraced the idea, has cautioned that size alone cannot determine whether a firm poses a threat. A separate provision being considered would curb the Fed's emergency loan powers.

Under 1932 law, the Fed can issue loans in "unusual and exigent circumstances" when a borrower is unable to access enough credit from banks. During last year's financial crisis, the Fed invoked that power to try to spare major firms from collapse.

Frank, D-Mass., said the latest bill might establish a separate facility funded by the Fed to provide emergency loans. But "no entity would be allowed to borrow from that facility in times of a liquidity crisis unless they are very adequately capitalized," he told reporters.

Both measures still face scrutiny on the House floor and in the Senate, where Republicans hold more sway and Democrats are drafting their own legislation.

As early as Monday, Senate Banking Committee Chairman Chris Dodd, D-Conn., was expected to outline his plan to overhaul the nation's financial regulations.

Dodd was likely to give the Fed less power than Frank's proposal and merge bank supervision under a single regulator. Republicans were expected to oppose several provisions, including the establishment of a new government agency dedicated to protecting financial consumers. □

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NEW ORLEANS

Continued from Page B1

The new flood protection is already having a potentially dangerous consequence, though: It's encouraging more people to move into another bowl-shaped area that experts consider perhaps the city's most vulnerable flank.

While New Orleans' population plummeted by 300,000 after Katrina, residents quickly returned to the west bank of the Mississippi River, many under the mistaken impression that the area was safer.

The fact that the West Bank didn't flood was mainly chance, however. Engineers say the area's 250,000 residents are exposed to surge from a storm coming in at just the right angle, thanks in part to navigation and drainage

canals that feed in.

So the corps broke ground last week on the West Closure Structure, a floodgate and pump system designed to close off those canals and bolster the area's levees.

As the name implies, the West Bank is west of the Mississippi River and the French Quarter, in a place tourists pass through only if they're on their way to swamp tours. So far, it has been spared catastrophic flooding. Katrina passed to the east in August 2005, and the West Bank was one of the only dry places in the city after levees failed on the East Bank, the main part of the metro area. But after Katrina, hurricanes Rita and Gustav pushed water levels dangerously high in canals on the West Bank.

Roy Dokka, the executive

director of the Center for GeoInformatics at Louisiana State University, said up to 70 percent of the West Bank could be underwater if a monster storm were to hit it.

The West Bank project is one of two the corps is building to protect New Orleans, the other being a similar storm surge barrier on the East Bank that closes off the Inner Harbor Navigation Canal.

With large areas of the West Bank undeveloped pasture, woods and wetlands, the improved levee system will spur development, especially since most of the East Bank is crammed with houses and businesses.

"It's the only land left for large populations to grow," said state Rep. Ricky J. Temple, a Republican who represents a

swath of the West Bank. "The sky's the limit. On the West Bank, we were the last to get started on our flood protection. Some people will be able to sleep at night now."

They shouldn't sleep too soundly, according to Robert Bea, a civil engineer with the University of California, Berkeley, and an expert on the New Orleans levee system. Bea called the West Bank project an example of the corps' flawed levee building policies, designed to handle a 100-year storm rather than shelter the area for many centuries like dikes in the Netherlands.

Bea's advice to West Bank developers and homeowners: "Build high, build strong because the level of protection is not sufficient to build low



The Army Corps of Engineers begins a \$1 billion project, the West Closure Structure, to close off navigation and drainage canals that feed into the West Bank and turn into conduits for storm surge during hurricanes, in Harvey, La.

Associated Press

and weak."

If anything, though, building requirements will get more lax after the levee system is finished.

Tom Rodrigue, the flood plain manager for Jefferson Parish, said developers most likely would wait for the levees to be certified as acceptable by the Federal Emergency Management Agency before building. FEMA certification opens the door for cheaper flood insurance and building lower to the ground.

Counting the West Closure Structure, the Army Corps is pouring more than \$2 billion into finishing the long-overdue levee system on the West Bank. The agency now says it plans to have most of the West Bank hurricane protection done by 2011. □

Police: 3 ND college students found dead in pond

By BLAKE NICHOLSON

Associated Press Writer

DICKINSON, N.D. — Three missing North Dakota college softball players were found dead Tuesday in a Jeep pulled from a pond, and police said they believed the women were in the vehicle when they made two desperate calls to friends for help.

Police Lt. Rod Banyai said officers are investigating the cause of the deaths and autopsies are planned. He said he believes the women were in the Jeep when they called for help, but he didn't know whether it already was under water when those calls were made.

"At this time, foul play is not suspected," Banyai said Tuesday night.

Authorities had been searching since late Sunday night for Kyrstin Gemar, 22, of San Diego; Afton Williamson, 20, of Lake Elsinore, Calif.; and Ashley Neufeld, 21, of Brandon, Manitoba.

The Dickinson State University students were believed to be in the white 1997 Jeep Cherokee with California plates when two of their friends received telephone calls before the lines went dead.

Police described the first as a "very scratchy" call for help in which one of the women said they were near a lake and water.

Banyai said the 12-foot deep

pond where the women were found is on a farm northwest of Dickinson, a city of 16,000 people about 100 miles west of Bismarck and 60 miles east of the Montana state line. Vehicle tracks were found leading into the pond Tuesday afternoon, he said.

"After that was located, the plane flew over the top and it could see that there was a white object in the water," Banyai said. The submerged vehicle was pulled from the pond about two hours later. Banyai said the vehicle will be checked for defects. He said authorities don't know how it got into the pond.

Kyrstin Gemar's parents,

Lenny and Claire, said during an earlier news conference at police headquarters, before the bodies were found, that they had talked to their daughter late Saturday night. Lenny Gemar said it was not uncommon for his daughter and her friends to go star gazing on the spur of the moment.

The women's families were not at the news conference where police announced the deaths.

Students at Dickinson State, where the women were stars on the school's softball team, led a prayer service Monday night that drew more than 300 people. Another service was scheduled at the 2,700-student

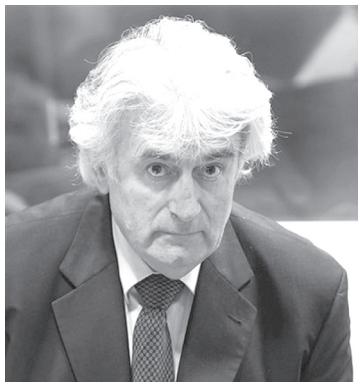
school for Tuesday night.

"We are very deeply saddened by this turn of events and we are going to mobilize all of our resources to work with the families and the students on campus," Dickinson State spokeswoman Constance Walter said. "They will be greatly missed by their teammates and others."

The college lists Gemar as a senior business major who played third base on the softball team. Neufeld is a senior outfielder who is working on a degree in psychology, and Williamson, a junior, is a pitcher majoring in psychology with a minor in coaching. □

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Karadzic attends U.N. war crimes court for first time

MIKE CORDER,
Associated Press Writer

THE HAGUE, Netherlands (AP) — Radovan Karadzic appeared at his U.N. war crimes trial on Tuesday for the first time since it began last week, claiming his "fundamental rights have been violated" by judges who started without him.

The former Bosnian Serb leader, accused of masterminding Serb atrocities throughout the 1992-1995 Bosnian war, had boycotted the first three days of the trial. On Tuesday, Karadzic, who

is defending himself, again insisted that he needed more time to prepare.

"I do not want to boycott these proceedings, but I cannot take part in something that has been bad from the start and where my fundamental rights have been violated," Karadzic said.

Karadzic faces two counts of genocide and nine other charges of crimes against humanity and war crimes. He has refused to enter pleas, but insists he is innocent of all charges.

The prosecution's two-day opening statement portrayed Karadzic as the supreme commander of a brutal campaign to ethnically cleanse Muslims and Croats from Bosnian Serb claimed territory. The campaign included the deadly 44-month siege of the capital, Sarajevo, and culminated in the 1995 massacre of some 8,000 Muslim men and boys in the eastern enclave of Srebrenica. Prosecutor Hildegard Uertz-Retzlaff urged judges to impose a court-appointed lawyer on Karadzic so that the case can continue even if he continues his boycott.

"Mr. Karadzic cannot be allowed to manipulate the proceedings through his decision to not attend hearings," she said.

However, she acknowledged that if a new lawyer is appointed to represent Karadzic, the attorney may need months to prepare.

She told judges they could also force Karadzic into court if he continues his boycott.

"If necessary, force can be used to secure his presence in the court room," she said.

Presiding Judge O-Gon Kwon said judges would issue a written ruling later in the week on how to proceed. He canceled a trial hearing scheduled for Wednesday and adjourned the trial pending the ruling.

The war crimes court is desperate to avoid Karadzic's trial becoming a carbon copy of the case against his political mentor, former Yugoslav president Slobodan Milosevic, whose political grandstanding, stalling tactics and ill health dragged his trial out for more than four years.

Milosevic's trial ended without a verdict in 2006 after he died of a heart attack in his U.N. jail cell.

Milosevic also defended himself, and when the war crimes court forced a defense lawyer on him in an attempt to speed up proceedings Milosevic refused to cooperate with him.

Karadzic says he has not had enough time to prepare his defense — even though he was indicted in 1995 and has been in custody for 14 months.

"The situation is such that I would really be a criminal if I were to accept these conditions — to enter a trial for which I am not prepared," he said.

Karadzic said prosecutors have loaded him down with 1.3 million pages of evidence and that he only has been able to work on his defense since May, when he got all the evidence from prosecutors.

He said he was not ready to deal with the first three prosecution witness, who were to have testified this week, or to make an opening statement.

And he rejected the proposal of having a lawyer appointed by the court to represent him.

"I don't need other people, I just need time," he said. "It would be cheapest and easiest, with fewest problems to give me more time to prepare."

But Kwon said Karadzic was repeating claims he has made in pretrial hearings and in motions that have already been rejected by trial and appeal judges. He signaled the court is unlikely to grant him any more time.

"At the end of the day, I again remind you that it is in your best interest to attend and participate fully in the trial so that justice can be done," Kwon said. □

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Czech president signs EU Lisbon Treaty reform

KAREL JANICEK

Associated Press Writer

PRAGUE (AP) — A charter meant to transform Europe into a more unified and powerful global player passed its last major hurdle Tuesday and looks set to become law within weeks.

Czech President Vaclav Klaus, who has been highly skeptical of increasing the EU's powers, signed the Lisbon Treaty at the Prague Castle hours after his nation's Constitutional Court struck down a complaint against it. Klaus has been tirelessly attacking and stalling the document, claiming it would hand too much power to European Union institutions in Brussels. He was awaiting the Brno-based court's ruling before deciding whether to endorse it.

"I expected the decision of the Constitutional Court and respect it," Klaus told reporters Tuesday afternoon, but added he vehemently disagrees with the verdict.

"The Czech Republic will cease to be a sovereign state," once the treaty enters into force, he said.

Klaus was the last obstacle to the full ratification of the

treaty, which was bogged down in negotiations for almost a decade and has been ratified by all other 26 EU nations.

The Swedish EU Presidency said the treaty will enter into force on Dec. 1.

European leaders welcomed news of the signing.

"President Klaus' decision marks an important and historic step for all of Europe," British Prime Minister Gordon Brown said in a statement.

"Today is a day when Europe looks forward, when it sets aside years of debate on its institutions, and moves to take strong and collective action on the issues that matter most to European citizens: security, climate change, jobs and growth."

German Chancellor Angela Merkel noted during a speech to the U.S. Congress in Washington that, with the new treaty, the EU "will become stronger and more capable of acting, and so a strong and reliable partner for the United States."

"On this basis, we can build stable partnerships with others, above all with Russia, China and India," she added.

Sweden's Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt, who has worked to seal the Lisbon Treaty under the Swedish EU presidency, said he would call for an EU summit as soon as possible.

Klaus' "signature ends a far too long period of institutional focus within the EU," Reinfeldt said in a text message sent from Washington. "It opens up for a more democratic, transparent and efficient Union."

Earlier in the day, the Constitutional Court's chief judge, Pavel Rychetsky, said the Lisbon Treaty "does not violate the (Czech) constitution" and that all formal obstacles for ratification "are removed."

In Brussels, European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso said he was "extremely pleased" with the court's verdict.

"I hope that we can now move forward as quickly as possible on the nomination of the president of the European Council and vice president of the Commission High Representative," he said, referring to the newly created post of president, who will chair EU summits, and the bloc's new foreign policy



Czech Republic's President Vaclav Klaus briefs the press after signing the Lisbon Treaty at the Prague Castle in Prague, Czech Republic on Tuesday, Nov. 3, 2009. Klaus signed the Treaty after the Czech constitutional court approved the European Union's reforming Lisbon Treaty, one of the last hurdles to its ratification, saying it was in line with the country's constitution on Tuesday, Nov 3, 2009.

Associated Press

chief, who will represent the EU abroad.

Once the Lisbon Treaty becomes law, more policy decisions would be permitted by majority rather than unanimous votes at European summits. Those policies would then increasingly be shaped by the elected parliaments of each nation and the European Parliament, which currently has little say.

EU leaders say such new voting rules are needed to promote stronger policies in combating cross-border crime, terrorism and ecological threats.

Projecting this more decisive EU abroad would be a new fixed-term president — in place of a decades-old system

that rotates the presidency among governments every six months — and a new foreign minister.

Jerzy Buzek, president of the European Parliament, had appeared confident Klaus would sign the treaty, adding it should now enter into force by the end of the year.

Czech Prime Minister Jan Fischer said he was grateful Klaus finally initialed the document following the court's verdict, saying it sent an important signal to the rest of Europe.

"I am glad that the Czech Republic finally confirmed that it is a trustworthy partner for other member states," Fischer said. □

African kings, queens, chiefs to honor Mandela



King Tchiffi Zie Jean Gervais of Ivory Coast leaves after the launch of the Institute of African Royalty in Johannesburg, South Africa, Thursday Nov. 3, 2009. Two dozen traditional leaders from across the continent gathered on a Johannesburg university campus to launch the Institute of African Royalty, which they say will be a combination of think tank and lobby group.

Associated Press

DONNA BRYSON,
Associated Press Writer

JOHANNESBURG (AP) — Dancers clad in animal skins opened a royal ceremony Tuesday, a nod to tradition for the forward-thinking kings, queens and chiefs who jetted in to Johannesburg from across Africa to launch an institute they hope will expand their roles on the continent.

The two dozen leaders from Morocco to Swaziland describe their new Institute of African Royalty as part think-tank on democracy and development, part lobby group to polish their image. They say their

model is anti-apartheid icon and former President Nelson Mandela, and plan to honor the man referred to during Tuesday's proceedings as "Prince Mandela" at a gala ceremony in Pretoria, the capital, later this week. Sello Hatang, a spokesman for the anti-apartheid icon's office, said Mandela "feels honored to be respected by the traditional leadership." Mandela's family claims the royal chieftaincy of Mvezo, a village in southeastern South Africa, and he spent part of his childhood in the court of a tribal regent being groomed, like his father before him, to advise kings.

"My later notions of leadership were profoundly influenced by observing the regent and his court," Mandela wrote in his autobiography, describing meetings called to discuss community matters such as coping with droughts, managing cattle and responding to new laws decreed by the colonial government. "Everyone who wanted to speak did so. It was democracy in its purest form."

But as a young man, Mandela fled rural southeastern South Africa for Johannesburg to avoid a marriage arranged by the regent. During the apartheid years, Mandela clashed with his nephew, K.D. Matanzima. Matanzima collaborated with the white government to lead one of the homelands set up to deny blacks citizenship, and then ruled it like a despot.

Mandela tried to persuade Matanzima to reform, and reached out to other chiefs, even "while many of my comrades thought we should disdain those leaders." Nkosi Phathekile Holomisa, president of the Congress of Traditional Leaders of South Africa, called Mandela the "great reconciler" between traditionalists and modernists.

"During the era of colonialism and in our case apartheid, traditional leaders found themselves entangled in the systems and machinations of colonialists," said Holomisa, a chief from eastern South Africa whose independent group has been closely linked with Mandela's African National Congress.

Holomisa said traditional leaders have hesitated to criticize Africa's postcolonial governments. But as they watched the new leaders fail to eradicate poverty and entrench democracy, the old guard began to wonder whether it might have something to offer.

Daniel Masombuka, a 36-year-old city counselor who arrived Tuesday in the entourage of his relative, the Ndbele King Makhosonke II, said the spirit of listening and finding consensus that Mandela saw in the tribal meetings of his youth needed to be revived.

Masombuka, wearing a beaded collar piece and skins, has a degree in civil engineering, and is working on a master's in public administration. He is proof traditionalists "can do some things which are progressive," he said.

So is Joyce Mogale-Lefakane, a granddaughter of a king who ruled an area stretching to the north and west of what is now Johannesburg. She said once women were expected to stay silently at home while their men attended tribal councils, but "at this present moment, we, as women, we are raising our voices." Queen Ama Nana Amissah III from Ghana delivered one of Tuesday's main speeches, declaring: "For every successful king, there is a successful queen."

Like Queen Ama or another guest at Tuesday's event, Best Kemigisa, the queen mother of Toro in Uganda, most African royals no longer have more than ceremonial roles. The territories over which their ancestors once ruled are now incorporated into larger states, or cut by national borders.

In South Africa, the National House of Traditional Leaders was established by law in 1997 to give chiefs a formal role as advisers to the president on customary law and other issues. In Uganda, President Yoweri Museveni recently restored the traditional kingdoms his predecessor banned in 1967, but has been adamant that kings keep out of politics.

But Swazi King Mswati III, represented at Tuesday's gathering by a brother, holds most of the power in his southern African nation of just over 1 million people, resisting calls for greater democracy.

In Morocco, head of state Mohammed VI is known as a modernist. Mina Metioui, who was in Johannesburg as Mohammed's representative and whose family has advised Moroccan kings for generations, said African kings can transcend politics to give their people a sense of continuity.

"They've been born and raised to care for the countries of their ancestors," she said. "It's a tree that's been planted, and it's there for centuries." □

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KARZAI**Continued from Page B1**

Hamid Karzai did not spell out how he would institute reforms or mention whether he is willing to make concessions to his opponents.

Karzai spoke a day after being declared victor of an election so marred by fraud that it took two and a half months, and intense international pressure, to resolve. His main opponent, Abdullah Abdullah, said when he dropped out of the planned runoff that he was withdrawing because it could not be free or fair.

Karzai said in a speech he wants people from every part of the country in his government, including political opponents. But he never mentioned Abdullah by name.

"Those who want to work with me are most welcome, regardless of whether they opposed me in the election or whether they supported me in the elections," Karzai said.

Abdullah, who once served as Karzai's foreign minister, has said he will not join Karzai's

administration, but will work from the outside for reforms and for national unity.

Even so, people close to Karzai and Abdullah say they spent the past few days negotiating privately about ministry seats or accommodating Abdullah's platform in some way. The U.S. and its allies have also pressured Karzai to institute reforms and to reach out to the Abdullah camp.

President Barack Obama said Monday that he had called for a new chapter during a telephone call congratulating Karzai over his re-election.

When Karzai offered assurances, Obama told him that "the proof is not going to be in words. It's going to be in deeds."

Karzai said he needs international support and does not want to squander the goodwill of those supplying thousands of troops and funds to Afghanistan.

He said he wants to "make sure that the taxpayers' money coming to us from your countries is spent wisely

and rightly by us, the Afghan government, and also by the donors themselves."

He also said he would be as inclusive as possible, including welcoming Taliban who are ready to work with the government.

"We want our Taliban brothers and all others to come back and join with us," he added.

The Taliban claimed their own victory, saying in a statement the canceled runoff showed their efforts to derail the vote by threats and attacks were successful.

"Our brave mujahedeen were able to disrupt the entire process. Even the airstrikes and ground forces were not able to stop our mujahedeen from their attacks," the statement said. The canceled runoff vote also showed that Afghans heeded their call not to participate in an election they said was the tool of foreigners, the statement said. Election officials had cited security concerns as one reason not to go ahead with a vote with a foregone conclusion.



Afghan President Hamid Karzai, center, listens to questions as First Vice President Mohammad Qasim Fahim, left, and Second Vice President Abdul Karim Khalili look on during a press conference at the presidential palace in Kabul, Afghanistan, Tuesday, Nov. 3, 2009. Karzai reached out to his opponents, saying that he will welcome opponents into his government and promising reforms to root out corruption that has undermined trust in his administration Tuesday, a day after he was declared victor of a presidential election.

Associated Press

Karzai acknowledged to reporters Tuesday that Afghanistan "has a bad name from corruption." He repeatedly promised to tackle corruption during his previous five years as president but with little success.

"We will do our best through all possible means to eliminate this dark stain from our

clothes," he said.

Standing next to his new vice president — who has denied accusations of drug ties and corruption when he was last in the government as defense minister — Karzai said the problem of corruption was not certain officials. Instead, he blamed inadequate laws and enforcement. □

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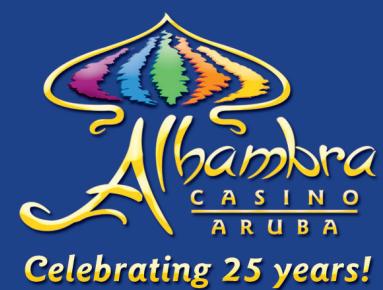


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SPORTS

Aruba TODAY

Utley, Lee help Phillies keep World Series alive

RONALD BLUM

AP Baseball Writer

PHILADELPHIA (AP) —

Chase Utley hit two home runs to raise his World Series total to a record-tying five as Philadelphia beat the New York Yankees 8-6 on Monday night to set up a Game 6 for the first time since 2003.

Utley hit a go-ahead, three-run homer in the first inning off A.J. Burnett and added a solo shot in the seventh to join Reggie Jackson as the only players to hit five home runs in a single World Series.

Philadelphia closed to 3-2 in the best-of-seven Series by replicating its winning formula from the opener, when Utley hit two solo homers and Cliff Lee pitched a six-hitter.

Ahead 8-2, the Phillies watched New York score three times in the eighth inning and put its first two batters on in the ninth.

The next game will be played Wednesday night at Yankee Stadium, with New York's Andy Pettite going on short rest against Pedro Martinez. The Series hasn't gone this far since 2003.

"We had to do it," Phillies



Philadelphia Phillies' Chase Utley, center, is congratulated by Jimmy Rollins and Shane Victorino after hitting a three run home run against New York Yankees' A.J. Burnett during the first inning of Game 5 of the Major League Baseball World Series Monday, Nov. 2, 2009, in Philadelphia. Rollins and Victorino also scored on the hit.

Associated Press

shortstop Jimmy Rollins said. "We didn't have a choice. It was either go home and watch football and college basketball or extend the season."

Utley said it was "pretty cool" to equal Reggie Jackson's

record.

"It's pretty surreal," he said. "I'm glad we got the win tonight. We're going back to Yankee Stadium."

When Raul Ibanez added a second solo shot in the seventh off Phil Coke, the

Phillies led 8-2.

Lee gave up a run-scoring single to Alex Rodriguez in the first inning but settled in until A-Rod chased him with a two-run double in the eighth. Robinson Cano drove in Rodriguez with a sacrifice fly that cut the deficit to 8-5, and New York gave Philadelphia a scare when Jorge Posada doubled and Hideki Matsui singled at the start of the ninth against Ryan Madson.

Jeter hit into the double play, Johnny Damon singled and Madson struck out the slumping Teixeira for the save.

"We have a lot of heart on this team," Utley said.

The Yankees, who have won the Series all eight previous times they took a 3-1 lead, will try to close out title No. 27 at home.

Pitching on short rest didn't work well for Burnett, who had been 4-0 previously in his career on three days' off and

kept the Phillies off balance in Game 2. He kept falling behind batters and allowed six runs, four hits and four walks in two-plus innings, his shortest start since his first outing in 2007.

Philadelphia ended baseball's record streak of five straight Series that ended in sweeps or five games, ensuring at least one more telecast in a matchup between big-market teams that has revived baseball's ratings. The Phillies still face a tall task: The Yankees lost three in a row just twice after the All-Star break and dropped consecutive home games only once after mid-June.

But Pettitte and CC Sabathia, the Yankees' Game 7 starter, will be pitching on short rest

— Pettitte for the first time this year and Sabathia for the third time in the postseason. If the Phillies come back to become the first NL team to win consecutive Series titles since the 1975-76 Cincinnati Reds, Yankees manager Joe Girardi will be widely second-guessed for his pitching decisions. No Series champion has gone the entire postseason with just three starters since the 1991 Minnesota Twins — when there were just two rounds of playoffs.

New York, trying for its first title since 2000, still has strong memories from 2001, when the Yankees led Arizona three games to two before losing the final two games on the road. In 2003, the Yankees led Florida two games to one before losing three in a row.

New York will be without center fielder Melky Cabrera for the rest of the Series. Cabrera strained his left hamstring in Game 4 and was replaced on the roster by backup infielder Ramiro Pena as Brett Gardner took over in center field. □

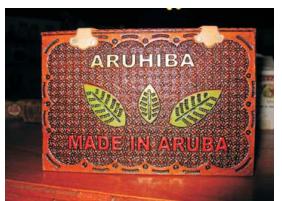
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Saints stay perfect with 35-27 win over Falcons

By BRETT MARTEL

AP Sports Writer

NEW ORLEANS — The Saints are still perfect, despite an imperfect performance, and now need one more win to set the record for best start in franchise history.

Drew Brees had 308 yards passing, Pierre Thomas scored two touchdowns and Jabari Greer returned an interception for a score to help the Saints improve to 7-0 with a 35-27 victory over the Atlanta Falcons on Monday night. Only the 1991 Saints began a season with as many wins and no Saints team has started 8-0. "We did a lot of things well and yet we did a lot of things that made it close at the end," Saints coach Sean Payton said. "I'm excited to win though. I'm excited to win this game and get to 7-0. It was an important game against a division team and I'm proud of our players. They fought."

Greer's touchdown was the Saints' fifth score on an interception this season, tying a single-season franchise mark set in 1998. Tracy Porter also had an interception on the Saints 1-yard line on a pass tipped by Jonathan Vilma in the fourth quarter, preserving a 28-24 lead after Thomas' fumble had given Atlanta the ball on the Saints 35.

Atlanta quarterback Matt

Ryan was intercepted three times, the third straight game he'd been intercepted at least twice.

Still, the Falcons stayed in it until the end, getting a 40-yard field goal from Jason Elam with 28 seconds left, then recovering an onside kick. Ryan only had time for a desperation heave in the final seconds, and Darren Sharper turned it into his seventh interception of the season. Sharper's interception also was the Saints' 16th overall this season, surpassing New Orleans' total of 15 from 2008. The Saints have at least one interception in every game this season.

"The way we've been able to (get turnovers) and score is a big reason we're where we're at right now," Payton said. Brees hit Marques Colston for an 18-yard score. Thomas scored on a 22-yard run in the first quarter and a 1-yard catch out of the backfield with 3:03 to go, flipping backward over a tackler and into the end zone. That touchdown made it 35-24 and ignited the entire Superdome into chants of "Who dat say they gonna' beat them Saints?"

"Pierre did a good job of getting through that last defender," Payton said. "It was following the series where he fumbled and it was good to see him

respond."

Reggie Bush added a 1-yard touchdown late in the first half, giving the Saints a lead they would not relinquish. Roddy White beat Greer on a 68-yard scoring pass from Ryan early in the third quarter, and the Falcons pulled to 28-24 on Elam's 25-yard field goal with 11:33 to go in the game. That field goal, however, came only after Payton sprinted down the sideline and launched his red flag about 20 yards, just in time to challenge a game-tying touchdown catch by White in the back of the end zone. Replays showed White allowed the ball to touch the turf as he bobbled the catch.

The loss, Atlanta's second straight, dropped the Falcons (4-3) three games behind the Saints in the NFC South. It marked the first time the Falcons had lost two straight under second-year coach Mike Smith. It also squandered Michael Turner's best game of the season. He had 151 yards rushing, including a 13-yard touchdown.

The Falcons' defense also produced a score. Thomas DeCoud's jarring sack on a delayed blitz up the middle dislodged the ball from Brees and Kroy Biermann returned it from the 4-yard line, giving Atlanta a 14-7 lead late in the first quarter.



New Orleans Saints cornerback Jabari Greer (32) intercepts a pass by Atlanta Falcons quarterback Matt Ryan during the first half of an NFL football game in New Orleans, Monday, Nov. 2, 2009.

Associated Press

Brees also was intercepted on a spectacular leaping grab by Brent Grimes.

Brees never got rattled through, completing 15 of his first 17 passes and leading three scoring drives in the first half. Two of his top targets were Colston, who finished with 85 yards on six catches, and tight end Jeremy Shockey, who caught five passes for 72 yards.

Atlanta had two first-half drives stall on Elam's missed field goal attempts from 34 and 51 yards.

A little more than three years ago, the Falcons were

the visitors when the Saints returned to the newly reopened Louisiana Superdome for the first time since Hurricane Katrina. That Monday night had a storybook start for the Saints, who scored on a blocked punt on Atlanta's opening drive.

With those vivid memories still fresh, the Superdome crowd was cheering wildly as the Saints defense took the field after the opening kickoff.

This time, however, Ryan calmly led the Falcons 77 yards for a score, with Turner gaining 38 of those yards, including his lone TD. □



New York Islanders goalie Dwayne Roloson is congratulated at the end of the game by Brendan Witt (32) and Nate Thompson (11) after the Islanders beat the Edmonton Oilers 3-1 in an NHL hockey game Monday, Nov. 2, 2009, in Uniondale, N.Y.

Associated Press

UNIONDALE, New York (AP) — Brendan Witt posted his first two-goal game in the NHL as the New York Islanders stretched their winning streak to a season-high four games with a 3-1 victory over the

NHL Roundup

Witt's 2 goals give Isles 4th straight win

Edmonton Oilers on Monday night.

Witt, a defenseman in his 14th NHL season, has netted only 25 in his 862-game career and had gone 92 contests since his previous goal on Jan. 22, 2008, at Carolina.

Doug Weight, New York's 38-year-old captain, helped set up rookie John Tavares' first-period goal and earned another assist on Witt's second.

New York lost its first six games of the season but has won five since.

Ethan Moreau scored for Edmonton, which has lost five of six overall and has dropped five straight on the road.

Flyers 6, Lightning 2

At Philadelphia, Mike Richards and Jeff Carter scored two goals apiece and rookie David Laliberte and Scott Hartnell also tallied for the Flyers.

The Flyers' excitement over their victory was offset by the news that star winger Simon Gagne will miss six to eight weeks. He is scheduled to have hernia and hip surgery on Tuesday.

Steven Stamkos and James Halpern scored for Tampa

Bay.

Kings 5, Coyotes 3

At Glendale, Arizona, Drew Doughty scored the go-ahead goal with 4:51 remaining as the Kings rallied for a win.

Ryan Smyth scored twice, Anze Kopitar had a goal and two assists, and Justin Williams also scored for the Kings.

Shane Doan, Martin Hanzal and Scottie Upshall scored for the Coyotes, who saw their three-game winning streak snapped but received better news off the ice.

Earlier Monday, U.S. Bankruptcy Court Judge Redfield T. Baum approved the Coyotes' sale to the NHL with the league intending to find a buyer committed to keeping the franchise in Glendale. The conclusion of the team's bankruptcy proceedings didn't help the Coyotes avoid a franchise-record low announced crowd of 5,855.

In other NHL games it was, Philadelphia 6, Tampa Bay 2; N.Y. Islanders 3, Edmonton 1; and Los Angeles 5, Phoenix 3. □

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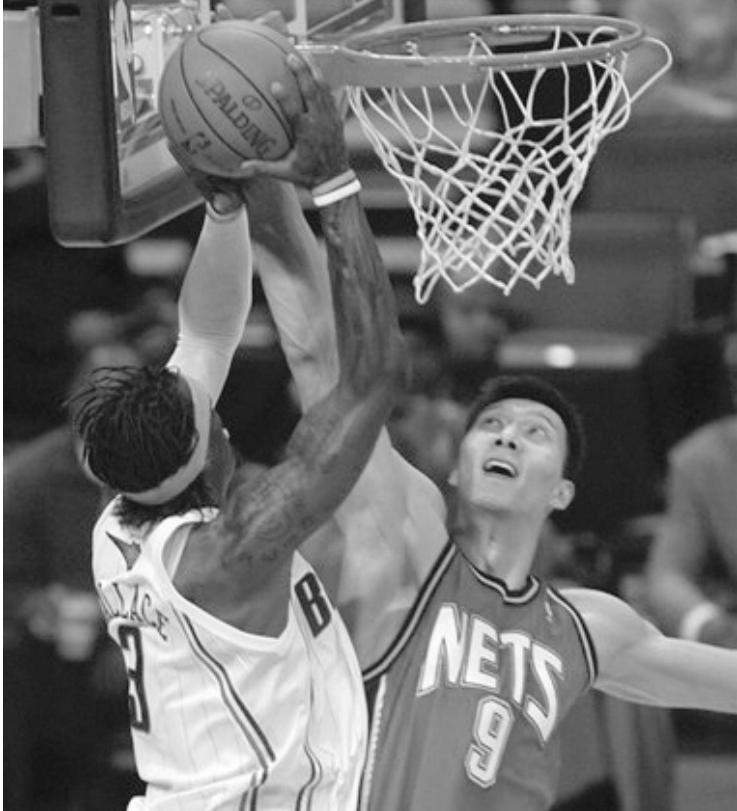
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**NBA Roundup****Bobcats rally past struggling Nets, 79-68**

Charlotte Bobcats' Gerald Wallace, left, has his shot blocked by New Jersey Nets' Yi Jianlian (9), from China, during the first half of an NBA basketball game on Monday, Nov. 2, 2009 in Charlotte, N.C.

Associated Press

The Associated Press

CHARLOTTE, North Carolina (AP) — Gerald Wallace had 24 points and 20 rebounds and the Charlotte Bobcats held the New Jersey Nets without a point for more than 10 minutes during a 79-68 victory on Monday.

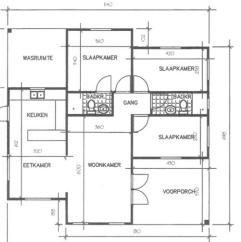
The Nets' ineptitude allowed Charlotte to go on a 24-0 run bridging the third and fourth quarters in the longest scoring drought in the NBA in nearly four years. D.J. Augustin added 21 points for the Bobcats.

In one brutal stretch, the Nets lost Yi Jianlian to a sprained right knee and went nearly 11½ minutes without a field goal. The Nets went 0-for-11 from the field with nine turnovers before Chris Douglas-Roberts' three-point play.

Douglas-Roberts had 20 points and Brook Lopez added 18.

Knicks 117, Hornets 111

At New York, David Lee scored a season-high 28 points as New York earned its first victory of the season.

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Chris Duhon finished with 18 points and nine assists for the Knicks, who lost three straight and were off to their worst start since dropping their first five games in 2005-06. But they played from ahead this time after facing huge deficits in their previous games, then pulled away midway through the fourth quarter. Chris Paul had season highs of 32 points and 13 assists for the Hornets, who were coming off a loss in Boston on Sunday night. Emeka Okafor added 24 points, his best game with New Orleans, and grabbed 10 rebounds. David West scored 21 points.

Rockets 113, Jazz 96

At Salt Lake City, rookie Chase Budinger scored a career-high 17 points and was one of eight Houston players to score in double figures.

The Rockets pulled away with a 13-0 run early in the fourth quarter.

Aaron Brooks had 19 points and nine assists and Luis Scola added 14 points and 15 rebounds for the Rockets, who made eight of their first 12 shots in the fourth quarter to blow open a three-point game.

Deron Williams had 18 points and eight assists and Andrei Kirilenko added 18 points and seven rebounds for the Jazz.

At Sacramento, Kevin Martin scored 48 points and Beno Udrih hit a game-tying layup in the closing seconds of regulation to lift Sacramento in overtime in its home opener.

After starting the season with three straight losses on the road, the Kings came through late to delight a rare sellout crowd in Sacramento. It was a back-and-forth game down the stretch with both teams delivering big shots on a night little defense was played.

The two biggest for the Kings were Udrih's driving layup with 1.6 seconds left in regulation and Martin's seventh 3-pointer that gave Sacramento a 116-112 lead with 1:45 remaining in overtime.

Zach Randolph had 30 points and 16 rebounds before fouling out in overtime, Rudy Gay added 21 points and 12 rebounds and O.J. Mayo scored 22 for the Grizzlies.

Clippers 93, Timberwolves 90

At Los Angeles, Chris Kaman had 25 points and 11 rebounds and Eric Gordon hit the go-ahead layup with 1:32 to play as Los Angeles surged in the fourth quarter to its first victory of the season.

In other NBA games t was, Charlotte 79, New Jersey 68; New York 117, New Orleans 111; Houston 113, Utah 96; Sacramento 127, Memphis 116, OT; and L.A. Clippers 93, Minnesota 90. □



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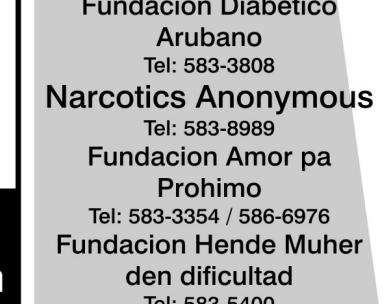
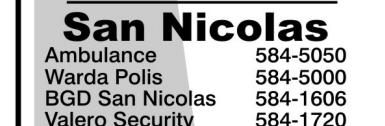
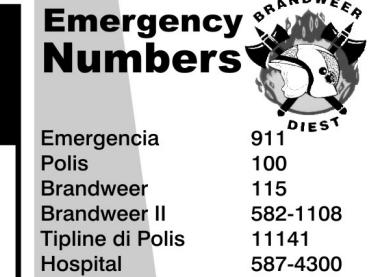
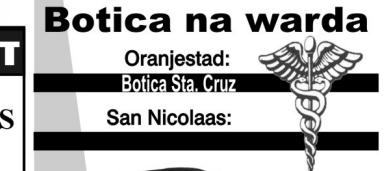
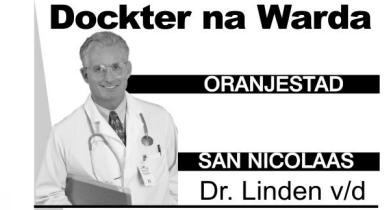
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Zelaya pierde round para retomar poder en Honduras

TEGUCIGALPA (Reuters)

- Los líderes del Congreso de Honduras decidieron el martes pedir la opinión de los poderes judicial y ciudadano antes de votar la posibilidad de restituir al depuesto presidente Manuel Zelaya, dilatando la convocatoria a una sesión clave para debatir el futuro del líder. La decisión, informada por dos legisladores a Reuters, desafía un acuerdo alcanzado la semana pasada entre negociadores de Zelaya y el Gobierno de facto con la mediación de Washington, cuyo punto central es que el Congreso vote sobre la vuelta al poder del derrocado mandatario.

"Confirmado, se acordó enviar a la Corte, al Ministerio Público y a la Procuraduría General de la República", dijo a Reuters Antonio Rivera, subjefe de

bancada del Partido Nacional. "Una vez que hayan los reportes de los tres órganos nos reuniremos", añadió.

El acuerdo logrado la semana pasada, dentro de los intentos por superar la crisis desatada por el golpe de Estado de fines de junio, contemplaba la posibilidad de que el Congreso pidiera la opinión no vinculante de la Corte Suprema, pero la directiva parlamentaria sumó a otros órganos del poder público. La decisión de la Junta Directiva del Congreso no fue unánime. Tres de los 13 miembros votaron en contra de pedir la opinión de la Corte Suprema e intentaron fijar un plazo de 24 horas para que los órganos consultados den su informe y así pudiera ser convocada la sesión para votar sobre el futuro de defenestrado mandatario. El



El presidente depuesto de Honduras, Manuel Zelaya, sonríe durante una visita de familiares en la embajada de Brasil en Tegucigalpa, 1 nov 2009. REUTERS/Edgard Garrido

diputado liberal Erick Rodríguez pidieron la opinión a la Corte Suprema, Fiscalía, pero no Rodríguez dijo que de forma "urgente" Procuraduría y fijaron un plazo. □

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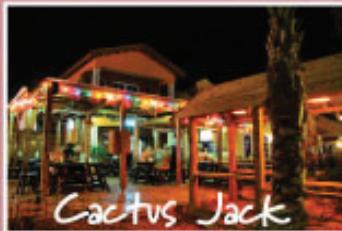


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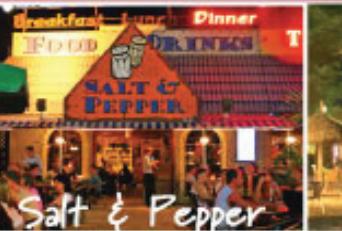
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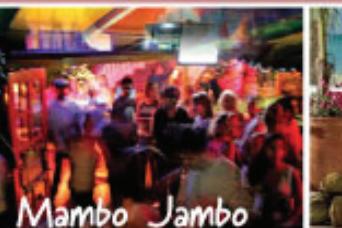
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